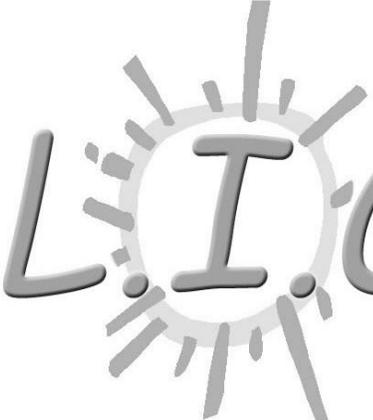


Project  L.I.G.H.T.

**Learning Islamic Guidance  
for Human Tolerance**

*2003-2004 Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area*

Funded by a grant from the National Conference on Community and Justice (NCCJ). Developed, facilitated and presented, in cooperation with the Graduate School for Islamic and Social Sciences (GSISS), by:

Dr. Amr Abdalla  
Sr. Patricia Anton

Dr. Eltigani Abdelgadir Hamid

Sr. Kareema Altomare  
Sr. Jerusha Rhodes

# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	3
Guiding Principles .....	5
Outcomes .....	6
Staff Profiles .....	7
Grounding Workshop Overview .....	10
Human Interaction .....	11
Section Overview .....	12
Concepts .....	13
Activities .....	15
Bibliography .....	18
Notes .....	19
Human Interaction in the Muslim American Context .....	21
Section Overview .....	22
Concepts .....	23
Activities .....	28
Bibliography .....	30
Notes .....	32
Islamic Guidance on Human Tolerance .....	34
Section Overview .....	35
Concepts .....	36
Activities .....	45
Bibliography .....	50
Notes .....	51
Islamic Methodology .....	53
Section Overview .....	54
Concepts .....	55
Activities .....	57
Bibliography .....	60
Notes .....	62
What About...? .....	64
Section Overview .....	65
Concepts .....	66
Activities .....	69
Bibliography .....	71
Notes .....	72
En“LIGHT”ened Communication & Interaction .....	74
Section Overview .....	75
Concepts .....	76
Activities .....	77
Bibliography .....	80
Notes .....	81
Activity Results .....	83

## Project Introduction

The world experienced an immense tragedy with the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. This tragedy has been compounded by an aftermath that is lived and felt by so many. Among the victims of this tragedy are Islam and Muslims. They have been rampantly misrepresented, misunderstood and described as inherently associated with this heinous act, an act that is forbidden and condemned by they themselves. Optimistically, this tragedy has, also, created avenues and opportunities for discourse and education, opportunities for re-presenting and understanding, opportunities to stand up for and speak on truth and justice. Thus, it is from the darkness of tragedy that we find hope and L.I.G.H.T.

Project L.I.G.H.T., *Learning Islamic Guidance for Human Tolerance*, is a one-year anti-bias program funded by the National Conference on Community and Justice (NCCJ). The Chevron-Texaco Foundation recognizing the backlash experienced by many after September 11<sup>th</sup> donated money to NCCJ to support programs designed to expand the capacity of individuals, institutions and agencies to respond to prejudice expressed against many individuals and communities, especially South Asians, Muslims, and Arabs. Project L.I.G.H.T. was developed by and is facilitated and organized by a team of faculty and students from The Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences (GSISS) in Leesburg, VA.

The main goal of Project L.I.G.H.T. is to empower ordinary members of the Muslim community through education on Islam's fundamental messages of tolerance, inclusiveness and peaceful coexistence for all people, and on personal skills to identify and address bigotry and discrimination. Participants will be trained in these skills, and then they will develop these messages into lesson plans that they will utilize in interactive workshops for groups of their non-Muslim peers. Finally, together with their Non-Muslim peers, they will develop actions and formulate approaches to combat bigotry and discrimination in their communities.

Project L.I.G.H.T. has been developed with several objectives in mind. The first objective is to consider all issues from an Islamic viewpoint, using Islamic methodology centered on *tawhid*. Through this, participants are exposed to a variety of sources and they are encouraged to develop an Islamic understanding beyond legalism. The second objective is the actualization of teachings on diversity and pluralism in diverse participants from DC, VA and MD. The program is committed to intra-Muslim diversity and inclusiveness, as represented in different age groups, genders and ethnicities. The third objective is to embody the principle of equality through the use of a non-hierarchical training and learning structure and participatory leadership. The final objective is to utilize a people-to-people approach and an interactive learning style that will not only provide knowledge about the Islamic guidance on tolerance, but, also, through the development of interactions, transform the knowledge into attitudes and understandings that will be reflected in behavior and skills.

### About the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences

Project L.I.G.H.T. is administered through the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences (GSISS) in Leesburg, VA.

The Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences' curriculum is founded on the premise of the essential unity of human knowledge, in all its diversity, and its ultimate grounding in transcendent values, drawing on the principle of unicity (the *tawhidi* episteme). Complementing and corresponding

to this view of knowledge is an understanding of the unity and purposefulness of life in a world attuned to the humanistic and civilizing vocation of the individual person as a vicegerent of God on earth (*al-khalifa*).

This affirmative premise informs a two-pronged approach of critiquing and reconstructing the current legacy of human knowledge through the two principal domains of inquiry that constitute the school's mission focus: namely, the classical Islamic source sciences (*'ulum al shariah* and *'ulum al maqasid*) and the modern social science disciplines.

By reformulating the basic matrix of inquiry in terms of a unifying and transcendent vision, the way is paved for integrating, consolidating and building on the best in the “traditional” and “modern” scholarship along lines that reinforce the intrinsic sense of integrity, integrality and moral purpose.

## About the National Conference on Community and Justice (NCCJ)

Project L.I.G.H.T. is funded by a grant from the National Conference on Community and Justice (NCCJ). The National Conference on Community and Justice, founded in 1927 as the National Conference of Christians and Jews, is a human relations organization dedicated to fighting bias, bigotry and racism in America. NCCJ promotes understanding and respect among all races, religions and cultures through advocacy, conflict resolution and education. The National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ), with support from the Chevron-Texaco Foundation, awarded a total of \$1.5 million in September 11<sup>th</sup> Anti-Bias Project Award grants.

Nineteen organizations across the country, who focus on curbing discrimination against Arabs, Muslims and South Asians, received grants to continue their work in their local communities. GSISS was one of these organizations.

*We undertake this project seeking the pleasure of God. We pray that God accepts our efforts and guides us all with His light, for “Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth. The Parable of His Light is as if there were a niche and within it a lamp, the lamp enclosed in glass; the glass as it were a brilliant star, lit from a blessed tree, an olive, neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil is well-nigh luminous, though fire scarce touched it: Light upon Light! Allah doth guide whom He will to His Light, Allah doth set forth Parables for people, and Allah doth know all things.” (24:35)*

# Guiding Principles

Project L.I.G.H.T. is guided by and based upon the following principles:

People-to-people Approach

Interactive Learning

Inter-Muslim Diversity (gender, age, ethnicity, geographical location)

Exposure to a Wide Variety of Sources

Understanding More than Legalistic Rationales

Moving Beyond “Us” and “Them” Dichotomies

Participatory Leadership

Non-hierarchical Structure

Applied Islam

# Outcomes

Project L.I.G.H.T. aims to provide participants with essential knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to embark on a path of constructive anti-bias outreach work. Participants will not, as a result of Project L.I.G.H.T. training, become professional trainers or scholars; rather they will improve their ability to do proactive and informed outreach and education, for the pleasure of Allah.

## Knowledge

Be knowledgeable about:

- the historical background of the encounters between Muslims and the West
- the various historical experiences of Muslims in America
- commonalities and differences among religious groups

Be familiar with:

- the concepts of Islamic universality, *kafirun*, *mushrikun*, *jihad*
- methodology of interpreting the Qur'anic and *Hadith* texts

## Attitudes

Understand that:

- bigotry and bias erode spiritual development
- inviting others to Islam entails understanding and sympathy

Have a general knowledge of, and where possible, exposure to:

- various religious faiths
- the American system of justice and government

Be aware of:

- stereotypes, their sources and functions
- assumptions about “us” and “them”
- misused and abused concepts (*kafir*, *jihad*, etc.)

Be aware of:

- various indicators of bigotry and discrimination in the media, public places and schools
- appropriate/inappropriate interactions with Christians, Jews, Muslims, and members of other faiths

## Skills

Be able to acknowledge and address:

- Muslims' misunderstandings and biases
- Differences, as well as, commonalities

Be able to communicate and sustain:

- a reasonable level of concern
- objectivity and fairness

Be able to effectively use:

- Islamic sources (Qur'an and *Sunnah*) to convey the values of peace, tolerance and justice
- available community resources to ensure a continuous care for the other

Be able to:

- Organize and educate a caring number of your non-Muslim peers

## Staff Profiles

### Dr. Amr Abdalla, Education & Training Track Director

Dr. Amr Abdalla is an Affiliate Assistant Professor with the Peace Operations Policy Program at George Mason University. He is also a Professor of Conflict Analysis and Resolution at the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences and the United Nations' University for Peace in Costa Rica. His academic and professional careers are both multi-disciplinary; he obtained a law degree in Egypt in 1977 where he practiced law as a prosecuting attorney from 1978 to 1987, and he then emigrated to the U.S. where he obtained a Master's degree in Sociology and a PhD in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from George Mason University.

Dr. Abdalla has been teaching graduate classes in conflict analysis and resolution and has conducted training and evaluation of conflict resolution programs in Egypt, Switzerland, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Rwanda, Italy and Ireland. He has pioneered efforts to develop the first conflict resolution training manual for Muslim communities ("...Say Peace"). Dr. Abdalla has been an active figure in promoting effective cross-cultural messages within the Islamic and Arabic-speaking communities in America through workshops, TV, and radio presentations. He also has been actively involved in inter-faith dialogues with the Jewish and Christian communities in the United States.

### Dr. Eltigani Abdelgadir Hamid, Research & Evaluation Track Director

Dr. Eltigani Abdelgadir Hamid specializes in both Islamic studies and political science. He has his PhD from the University of London and obtained his undergraduate and Master's degree from the University of Khartoum. Dr. Hamid has taught at the University of Khartoum, Khartoum, Sudan; the International Islamic University, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia; the Islamic African Centre, Khartoum, Sudan; Omdurman Islamic University, Omdurman, Sudan; and the National Centre for Diplomatic Studies, Sudanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Khartoum, Sudan. He is the author of three books: *Poverty: An Introduction to the Bases of Political Economy in Islam*; *The Qur'an and Political Philosophy*; and *Bases of Political Thought in the Meccan Verses*. He has authored numerous papers and has attended and presented papers at international and national conferences.

### Sr. Kareema Altomare, Project Manager

Kareema Altomare was born in New York City, but also lived as a child in rural Virginia, and the small town of Kensington, MD. She attended the University of Maryland's pre-med program in the conservative 50's, and after having four children of her own, returned to the same school during the turbulent 60's. She received a BA degree in Psychology and Government and Politics, and took a position as a field-organizer for the Anti-Apartheid Movement of USA (AMUSA). Later, after moving to Washington, DC, she worked for 10 years in NGOs, while organizing on international justice issues. Kareema went back to school once again, and completed UDC's Master's program in International Labor Studies, working 4 years thereafter as a union organizer with the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

This path, a second marriage, and the death of a son, led Kareema to Islam. Twelve years ago, after visiting the Alhambra in Spain, she took *shahadah* and has worked in emerging Muslim organizations ever since (5 years with the American Muslim Council [AMC], where she helped to initiate the first Muslim American Bar Association; and the next 5 years with the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences [GSISS] in Student Services.) While at AMC, Kareema coordinated the Georgetown

Muslim Women's Study Project, looking at the UN Convention on Women, and was blessed to visit both Iran and China. While at GSISS, she had the opportunity to perform *Hajj*, and was able to audit 30 credits in Islamic Studies. After meeting Dr. Eltigani and Dr. Abdalla at GSISS, she began working with Project LIGHT.

#### **Sr. Patricia Anton, Education & Training Track Associate**

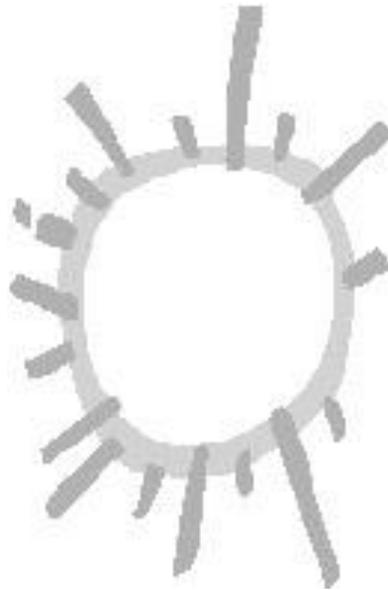
Originally from Medina, Ohio, Patricia received her bachelor's from the Ohio State University in International Studies focused on the Middle East. While an undergraduate, she accepted Islam in 1997 and then proceeded to become active in the campus Muslim Student Association and to intern with the Ohio Chapter of the Council on American Islamic Relations. After graduation she completed the one-year ISNA Graduate Fellowship in Non-Profit Management and Governance through the Indiana University Center on Philanthropy. Upon completion of the program, she remained at the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) as the Community Development Coordinator.

She has recently completed her Masters in Islamic Studies from the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences (GSISS) with a focus on Shari'ah. She has co-authored a training manual on an Islamic model of conflict resolution and, as part of a group from the school, conducts conflict resolution trainings for mosques and other groups. Currently, she is working on Program Outreach for GSISS and is a research assistant for Project LIGHT (Learning Islamic Guidance on Human Tolerance). She, additionally, works part-time at Sterling Management Group, Inc. She is a current member of the All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS) and serves on the ISNA community development committee.

#### **Sr. Asmaa Jerusha Rhodes, Research & Evaluation Track Associate**

Asmaa Jerusha Rhodes is an anthropologist who has worked primarily in the fields of cultural/diversity training and research. Graduating from American University with degrees in Cultural Anthropology and Religion, she specialized in West African traditional religious and cultural practices. She has worked with various international organizations including the Smithsonian Institution, Africa America Institute (USAID) and Migrant Head Start. In 2000, she received a Fulbright grant to study culture change in traditional arts in Ghana, West Africa. She had lived in Ghana during 1996 and 1999/2000, and it is there that she converted to Islam. She spent late 2000 and all of 2001 in Ghana conducting research. Since returning to the US, she has continued to work as a cross-cultural trainer, researcher, graphic designer and writer. Presently, she is enrolled in the Masters degree program in *Shariah* at the Graduate School for Islamic and Social Sciences. She expects to complete her degree early next year and intends to pursue her PhD in cross-group communication and conflict resolution.

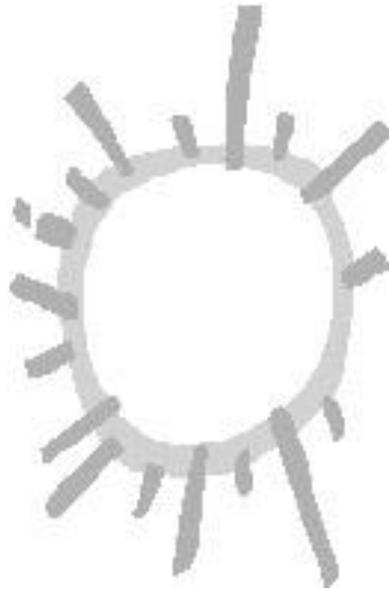
# Grounding



# Workshop

# Workshop Overview

- I. Human Interaction
  - Identity Flower
  - Diversity
  - What Are You Not?
  - Identity
  - Stereotypes
  - Interaction
  
- II. Human Interaction in the Muslim American Context
  - Muslims and Other Groups in the US
  - How History Has Shaped the Current Situation
  - Worldviews
  
- III. Islamic Guidance on Human Tolerance
  - Stories of the Prophet and *Sahabah*
  - Islamic Principles & Guidance
  - Qur'anic and *Hadith* Sources of Principles
  
- IV. Islamic Methodology
  - Why Do We Need Methodology?
  - Foundations of Islamic Methodology
  - Modern Challenges to Effective Utilization of Methodology
  
- V. What About...?
  - Misunderstandings and Methodology
  - Commonly Misunderstood or Misinterpreted Issues
  - Review of Issues
  
- VI. En“LIGHT”ened Communication & Interaction
  - Embodying Islamic Guidance
  - Utilizing Islamic Guidance to Understand Interaction
  - What You Learned & What You Want to Be Able to Do



# Human Interaction

## Section Overview

In this section, participants will be introduced to the basic concepts of identity, diversity and stereotypes. Participants will reflect upon and discuss the sources, functions and contributing factors in these areas. Participants will also learn about and discuss how identity, diversity and stereotypes affect human interaction.

- Identity Flower *Individual Activity*
- Diversity *Presentation & Debriefing*
- What Are You Not? *Small Group Activity*
- Identity *Presentation & Debriefing*
- Stereotypes
- Interaction

# Concepts

## Identity

Identity is an essential part of one's self, a part that an individual strives to discover, affirm and present to others. It includes two elements: how an individual conceives him or herself and whether the individual can or cannot achieve a mutual recognition with others. For the purpose of our project, both elements of identity can be problematic. A Muslim may misconceive the Islamic component of his/her identity, or he/she may know it, but misrepresent it to the others. Hence, an identity crisis within the Muslim is possible, unless they make a constant *ijtihad* in this regard.

Identity is something that every individual has and needs in order to exist and function in a social environment. Therefore, identity is a basic need that is found in all societies and cultural groups. Each individual has multiple identities; identity is multi-faceted. Identity can be simultaneously related to family, culture, religion, occupation, gender, age, et cetera. Different facets may be more or less important on a temporary or permanent basis depending on the situation or environment. Even though identity is integrally tied to social existence, it has both group and individual dimensions. Identity is formed through inclusion, as well as exclusion; identity is based on affirmation of certain things, as well as negation. Identity is expressed in a wide variety of forms, including actions, language, clothing, beliefs, practices, symbols, understanding and relationships.

## Diversity

Diversity refers to variety within in any group or society. Diversity can be reflected in any area of identity. In terms of our training, diversity is important because the Qur'an teaches us that diversity is an intentional aspect of creation from which we can learn. It is also important for us to recognize this diversity in the world at large, but, also, for us to recognize the diversity within the Muslim community, *ummah*.

## Stereotypes

Webster's New World Dictionary defines a stereotype as "a fixed notion or conception, as of a person, group, idea, etc, held by a number of people, and allowing for no individuality, critical judgment, etc." This definition identifies some important facets of stereotypes. To begin with, stereotypes are "notions" and "conceptions" about people, values and behaviors; they are not fact or empirical descriptions of the actual people, values or behaviors themselves. In some ways stereotypes are akin to generalizations, categorizations and descriptions of a group, but the main difference lies in the fact that stereotypes are always based upon limited, insufficient or oversimplified information. Secondly, stereotypes are "conceptions" that are held by a group of people. In other words, they are related to group identity because they can be one of many factors that the members of a group share in common. Finally, stereotypes do not allow for "individuality" on the part of the stereotyped group, or "critical judgment" on the part of the stereotyper. Stereotypes are the conceptions of one group about another and they do not address nor take into account the nuances and individuality that make up the other group. Furthermore, the absence of "critical judgment" means that the stereotyper does not "critically" analyze the value, factuality and experiential base of a stereotype. The Qur'an tells us, "And among His signs is the creation of heavens and the earth, and the difference of your languages and colors. Verily, in that are indeed signs for people of sound knowledge," (30:22). The

absence of "individuality" and "critical judgment" in stereotypes is the lack of "sound knowledge."

On a basic level, stereotypes, like generalizations and associations, serve the function of making sense of a very complicated world. A natural part of human development is the need to organize the vast amount of information we learn through experiences, emotion, socialization and history. We group, catalog and distinguish between the people, things, objects and experiences in the world in order to make sense of what would otherwise seem like chaos. This natural inclination to organize information serves another purpose; it allows us to predict the behavior and values of others. Unfortunately, since stereotypes are based on limited and inaccurate information and experiences, they create a false prediction and understanding of others' values and behaviors. Another aspect of stereotypes, one that distinguishes them from other ways of processing and sorting information, is that they are not purely objective categorizations of people; stereotypes are categorizations that involve emotion and value judgments. The categories become the stereotyper's expressions of his or her values.

Another significant source of stereotypes is a group's desire to express its own identity. This is done by not only saying what it "is," but also by juxtaposing itself against images, symbols and behaviors of other groups, in order to say what it "is not." In many cases, the act of stereotyping and the stereotypes themselves define not only the other group but perhaps more importantly and definitely more accurately, the group who is doing the stereotyping. This expression of self-identity is precisely the aspect of stereotypes that makes them so pervasive and so difficult to deconstruct.<sup>1</sup>

## Interaction

In general, interaction describes the reciprocal contact and communication between two or more individuals or groups. Since our identities shape how we behave and communicate, it necessarily follows that identity directly impacts interaction. Our ability to understand each other and interact in an effective or comfortable manner is greatly determined by our understanding of our own and other's identities and modes of behavior/communication. Some common forms of interaction are integration, coexistence, separation and hostility.

---

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from: Rhodes, Asmaa Jerusha. *Analyzing Stereotypes*. Atlanta: *Azizah Magazine*, Fall 2002.

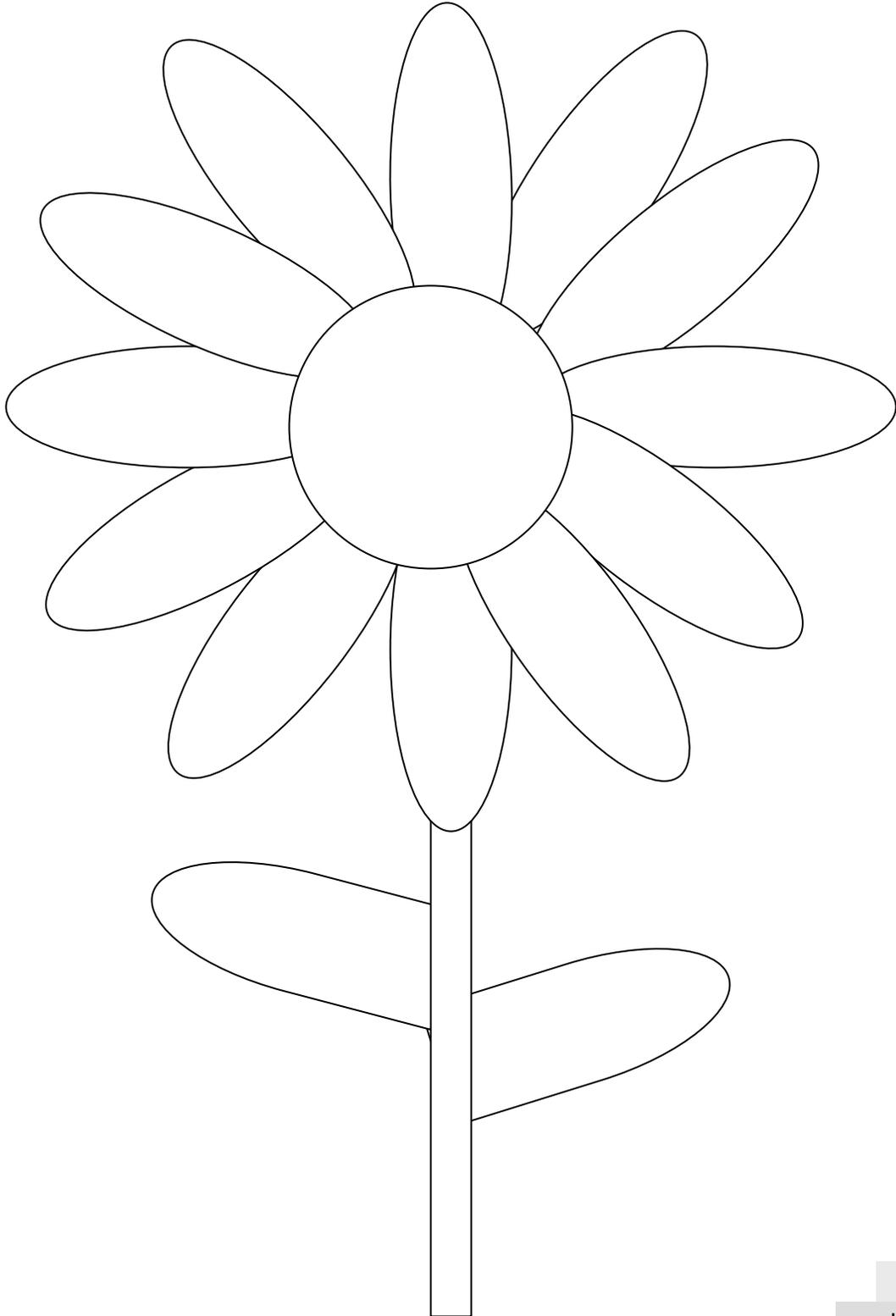
# Activities

Identity Flower

What Are You Not?

# Identity Flower

On each part of the flower write a different aspect of your identity.



## What Are You Not?

In small groups, please discuss the following four questions. Please assign one of you, with good handwriting (hopefully), to write a summary of each group member's responses and to present those responses to the larger group.

	Name a group that you are not part of.	What are some stereotypes (positive, negative or neutral) about the group?	Where do you think these stereotypes came from?	How do you think these stereotypes affect interaction with that group?
Person 1				
Person 2				
Person 3				
Person 4				

## Bibliography

Hall, Edward T. *Beyond Culture*. New York: Anchor Books, Double Day, 1989.

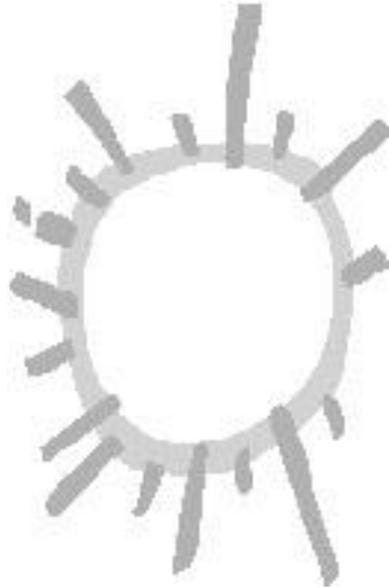
Rhodes, Asmaa Jerusha. *Analyzing Stereotypes*. Atlanta: *Azizah Magazine*, Fall 2002.

Romancucci-Ross, Lola and George De Vos ed. *Ethnic Identity: Creation, Conflict, and Accommodation*. London: AltaMira Press, 1995.

Rubin, Jeffery Z. *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate, and Settlement*. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1994.

# Notes

# Notes



# Human Interaction in the Muslim American Context

## Section Overview

In this section, participants will move from a general discussion of identity, stereotypes and interaction to a more specific discussion of these factors in the Muslim American context. Participants will reflect upon and discuss groups that are seen as different from Muslims in the US. This will include a discussion of stereotypes of the group and stereotypes that the group holds towards Muslims. This will lead to a discussion of how these stereotypes affect interaction between Muslims and other groups in the American context. Participants will, also, be introduced to the historical factors that have shaped Muslim and non-Muslim interaction. This will culminate in an examination of the key facets of the Western and Muslim worldviews.

- Muslims and Other Groups in the US *Group Discussion*
  
- How History Has Shaped the Current Situation *Presentation*
  
- Worldviews *Presentation & Debriefing*

# Concepts

## Islam as the Orient

Islam was made to be seen as alien and remote, the opposite of the “Occident.” The students of the Orient, the Orientalists, were expected to make authoritative statements about Islam and supply Western audiences with all the information that they needed to know about Islam. The Orientalists were not necessarily objective nor informed when it came to their subject matter, Islam. They wrote about and judged Islam based upon external and foreign concepts and notions, rather than notions that were internal and organic to Islam. Therefore, Islam was misrepresented and painted as the “other” in an “us/them” dichotomy. Islam was an “other” that was seen as inferior, backward and remote. This bred hostility and fear that continues in modern times.

## Islam as a Colony

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines colonization as the conquest and control of other peoples’ lands and resources.

By the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, 80% of the world was covered by colonies and ex-colonies, and most parts of the Muslim world were included. This deep penetration into Muslim societies involved restructuring them, controlling them and attacking certain symbols, values and institutions. Muslims, on their part, began to gradually recognize the injustice and resist it, relying on their social groups and religious and cultural values. The colonizers conceived the Islamic family system- with the traditional veiled woman at its center- as the cornerstone of a social structure that fuelled the anti-colonial sentiment. To destroy that structure, and its capacity for resistance, they felt that they had to conquer the woman. Hence the unveiling of the Muslim woman became an obsession, and the veil became a symbol of the colonial failure. At the same time, it became a symbol of Muslim identity, dignity and resistance.

Anti-colonial wars led, among other things, to the strengthening of traditions, both Islamic and pre-Islamic, and to the emergence of a European type of nationalism within Muslim communities. Some Muslims began to re-identify themselves, not only as Muslims who belonged to an extra-national *ummah*, but also as Algerians, Egyptians and Pakistanis. Others began to suspect both tradition and nationalism, and to call for a return to purer Islamic sources. Internal struggles flared among Muslims around the meanings of tradition and nationalism; their roles in achieving the post-independence development; and whether Muslims could develop their countries independent of the West or in collaboration with it. This struggle continues today.

## Islam in the News

Islam has been presented as a threat to the West by the media, academic experts and analysts. It has also been presented as a manifestation of those things disdained by the West. This presentation has been possible through a concentration on certain violent and unpleasant events. Although such events occur in all societies and in all groups, they are presented as integrally and intrinsically related to the core values of Islam. This presentation has been extremely harmful due to the fact that most Westerners come into to contact with Islam through the media, media not solely concerned with descriptive reporting. The media has highlighted the issues of oil, turmoil, conflict, “fundamentalism” and

“extremism,” always incorporating images of Islam including the call to prayers, mosques and women in *hijab*. This trend continues today, although the Muslim presence in the West and the closing of the gap between the Orient and the Occident has modified the format and blatancy of the representations.

### Islam Within America

The Muslim experience in America is extremely diverse. Muslims in America are not a single monolithic group. They come from a wide variety of ethnic, cultural, and historical backgrounds. American Muslims include individuals born in America, and those who have immigrated to America. Among those born in America are first generation children of immigrants, American converts and African-American brothers and sisters. The history of Muslims in America is long, and extends back far past relatively recent waves of immigration. It is important to become familiar with the history of Muslims in America related to slavery, African-American Islamic movements, immigration and conversion.

### Western Worldview(s)

The Western worldview is not a unified entity. There are many different facets, and different individuals and groups express these facets in varying degrees. It, also, must be noted that the West refers to a conceptual entity, rather than a reality that is confined to space, time or geography. Following are some prevalent components of the Western worldview.

#### Rationalism

“In philosophy, a theory that holds that reason alone, unaided by experience, can arrive at basic truth regarding the world. Associated with rationalism are the doctrine of innate ideas and the method of logically deducing truths about the world from “self-evident” premises. Rationalism is opposed to empiricism on the question of the source of knowledge and the techniques for verification of knowledge. René Descartes, G. W. von Leibniz, and Baruch Spinoza all represent the rationalist position, and John Locke the empirical. Immanuel Kant in his critical philosophy attempted a synthesis of these two positions. More loosely, rationalism may signify confidence in the intelligible, orderly character of the world and in the mind's ability to discern such order. It is opposed by irrationalism, a view that either denies meaning and coherence in reality or discredits the ability of reason to discern such coherence. Irrational philosophies accordingly stress the will at the expense of reason, as exemplified in the existentialism of Jean-Paul Sartre or Karl Jaspers. In religion, rationalism is the view that recognizes as true only that content of faith that can be made to appeal to reason. In the Middle Ages the relationship of faith to reason was a fundamental concern of scholasticism. In the 18th century rationalism produced a religion of its own called deism.”<sup>2</sup>

#### Efficiency

Efficiency describes an approach to activities and development that is characterized by an attempt to produce a desired outcome with minimal waste, expense or time. This approach is connected with capitalism and mass production. It, also, frequently negates or ignores the social factors that are involved in any process.

<sup>2</sup> Columbia Encyclopedia. Online Version, 2003.

## Individualism

Individualism refers to the “belief in the primary importance of the individual and in the virtues of self-reliance and personal independence...freedom from government regulation of personal economic or social goals...that the interests of the individual should take precedence over the interests of the group.”<sup>3</sup>

## Humanism

Humanism is a “philosophical movement in which human values and capabilities are the central focus. The term originally referred to a point of view particularly associated with the Renaissance, with its emphasis on secular studies (the humanities), a conscious return to classical ideals and forms, and a rejection of medieval religious authority.”<sup>4</sup>

Humanism was developed as a rejection of the authority of religion in the public sphere. In this philosophy, God and the church are removed from the state, and authority and power, moral and political, was given to the people. Humanism became a dominant worldview of Western society. It was held by the founding fathers of the United States of America and is reflected in the Declaration of Independence and the American Constitution. Mankind's interests and values are at the center of this worldview. Like Islam, humanism purports the essential goodness, value and equality of all human beings. However, an important difference is that Islam necessitates that God be the absolute center, and secular humanism places man at the center. The view does not necessitate atheism, but insists that God be subjected to the experience of man. Religion is tolerated and accepted, but is a personal affair.

Humanists value tolerance based on an "I'm ok, you're ok" philosophy which can verge on relativism.

## Secularism

In general, secularism refers to “religious skepticism or indifference” and “the view that religious considerations should be excluded from civil affairs or public education.”<sup>5</sup>

## Democracy

Democracy refers to “a government where the people share in directing the activities of the state, as distinct from governments controlled by a single class, select group, or autocrat. The definition of democracy has been expanded, however, to describe a philosophy that insists on the right and the capacity of a people, acting either directly or through representatives, to control their institutions for their own purposes. Such a philosophy places a high value on the equality of individuals and would free people as far as possible from restraints not self-imposed. It insists that necessary restraints be imposed only by the consent of the majority and that they conform to the principle of equality.”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Jost, David. *The American Heritage College Dictionary*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993.

<sup>4</sup> *The Concise Columbia Encyclopedia*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989.

<sup>5</sup> Jost, David. *The American Heritage College Dictionary*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993.

<sup>6</sup> *Columbia Encyclopedia*. Online Version, 2003.

## Capitalism

Capitalism refers to an “economic system based on private ownership of the means of production, in which personal profit can be acquired through investment of capital and employment of labor. Capitalism is grounded in the concept of free enterprise, which argues that government intervention in the economy should be restricted and that a free market, based on supply and demand, will ultimately maximize consumer welfare. Capitalism has existed in a limited form in the economies of all civilizations, but its modern importance dates at least from the Industrial Revolution that began in the 18th cent., when bankers, merchants, and industrialists—the bourgeoisie—began to displace landowners in political, economic, and social importance, particularly in Great Britain. Capitalism stresses freedom of individual economic enterprise; however, government action has been and is required to curb its abuses, which have ranged from slavery (particularly in Britain and the United States) and apartheid (in South Africa) to monopoly cartels and financial fraud. Capitalism does not presuppose a specific form of social or political organization: the democratic socialism of the Scandinavian states, the consensus politics of Japan, and the state-sponsored rapid industrial growth of South Korea while under military dictatorship all coexist with capitalism. Yet despite the capitalist ideal of “hands-off” government, significant government intervention has existed in most capitalist nations at least since the Great Depression in the 1930s. In the United States, it exists in the form of subsidies, tax credits, incentives, and other types of exemptions.”<sup>7</sup>

## Islamic Worldview

Three key aspects of the Islamic worldview are *tawhid*, vicegerency and universality.

### *Tawhid*

*Tawhid* is the foundational principle of Islam, which is expressed clearly in the proclamation, “There is no god but God.” This proclamation clarifies that there is only one god, and implies that God occupies a central position in the Islamic worldview. God, in this consciousness, is the ultimate reality. *Tawhid* can be better understood by examining some of its components.

First, reality is of two natures, one is God, the creator, and the other is non-God, the creation. These two natures are completely unique and can never be confused or confounded. The Creator “remains forever absolutely unique and devoid of partners and associates. The second is...creation. It includes all creatures, the world of things, plants and animals, humans, *jinn* and angels, heaven and earth, paradise and hell...”<sup>8</sup>

Second, the creation has a specific purpose. This purpose is defined, within the Islamic worldview, as serving the Creator. This purpose is ordered, not chaotic. However, man has a choice to act in accordance with the divine plan or to act against it. This freewill is fundamental to responsibility, judgment and morality.

Third, man is capable. Man has the ability to actualize the divine will in the creation. This reinforces the purpose of creation, in general, and in man, specifically. Therefore, man can change and effect change in himself and in nature in accordance with the divine pattern.

<sup>7</sup> *Columbia Encyclopedia*. Online Version, 2003.

<sup>8</sup> Al-Faruqi, Isma'il Rafi. *Al Tawhid: Its Implication for Thought and Life*. Herndon, VA: The International Institute for Islamic Thought, 1992, p. 10.

Finally, *tawhid* involves responsibility and judgment. In addition to man being able to effect change, he also has an obligation to do so in conformity with the divine pattern. This obligation is related directly with responsibility and judgment; man must recognize the obligation and take responsibility for fulfilling the obligation. In return, the Creator will judge his action.

### Vicegerency

The second core value of the Islamic worldview is vicegerency. In general, vicegerency is defined as the “position, function, or authority of a vicegerent,” where vicegerent is defined as “a person appointed by a ruler or head of state to act as an administrative deputy.”<sup>9</sup> In the Islamic worldview, as we saw in the above discussion of *tawhid*, man has been designated, by God, as vicegerent on earth; man is God’s “administrative deputy” charged with effecting change in accordance with the divine pattern and under obligation of the moral imperative.

Vicegerency also implies that God has subjugated the creation to man in order to facilitate his actualization of this. In *Surah al-Jathiyah*, verses 12 and 13, Allah says “It is Allah who has subjugated the sea to you, that ships may sail through it by His command, that ye may seek of His bounty, and that ye may be grateful. And He has subjected to you, as from Him, all that is in the heavens and on earth: behold in that are Signs indeed for who reflect.”

Another important aspect of man’s vicegerency on earth is the nature of this vicegerency. Man’s vicegerency is moral vicegerency; this morality is only possible in a creature that has free will and, therefore, the ability to choose to carry out the responsibility of the vicegerent.

### Universality

Universality refers to the fact that the message of Islam is not confined to a “chosen” people or a specific sacred land; it is a message for all mankind. The Qur’an is seen as the final message of guidance to all humanity. Furthermore, the values of Islam are seen to be universal. A Muslim, by virtue of this belief, rejects racial discrimination, cultural chauvinism and narrow nationalism. What follows from this is that any one who believes in this message bears the duty of conveying it to others. Conveying the message to others is one of the means of spiritual development for the Muslim. In essence, the message is a spiritual disclosure, *fath*, from God, thus when one believes in it, he also has to open himself up to others. A Muslim is expected to transmit guidance to others. Opening up to others, in this context, must necessarily be based on free discussion, mutual respect and sharing the wisdom of the message.

<sup>9</sup> Jost, David. *The American Heritage College Dictionary*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993, p. 1503.

# Activities

Muslims & Other Groups in America

# Muslims & Other Groups in America

Please share your opinions on the following issues.

1. What are some groups that you perceive as different from Muslims in America?
2. What stereotypes are there about the group? Where do they come from?
3. What stereotypes do they have about Muslims? Where do they come from?
4. How do both sets of stereotypes affect interaction?

## Bibliography

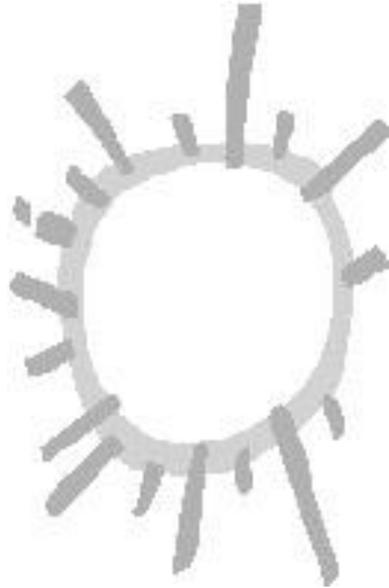
- Al-Attas, Syed Muhammad Al-Naquib. *Islam and Secularism*. Kuala Lumpur: Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia, 1978.
- Al-Faruqi, Isma'il Rafi. *Al Tawhid: Its Implication for Thought and Life*. Herndon, VA: The International Institute for Islamic Thought, 1992.
- Al Najjar, 'Abd al Majid. *The Vicegerency of Man: Between Revelation and Reason*. Herndon, VA: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2000.
- Armstrong, Karen. *Jerusalem: One City, Three Faiths*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1997.
- Asad, Muhammad. *Islam at the Crossroads*. Gibraltar: Dar Al-Andalus, 1982.
- Daniel, Norman. *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image*. Oxford: One World, 1993.
- Emerick, Yahiya. *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Understanding Islam*. Indianapolis: Alpha, 2002.
- Esposito, John. *Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.
- Esposito, John. *The Oxford History of Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Haddad, Yvonne Yazbeck. *Christian-Muslim Encounters*. Tampa, FL: University of Florida Press, 1995.
- Haddad, Yvonne Yazbeck. *The Muslims of America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Haque, Amber. *Muslims and Islamization in North America: Problems & Prospects*. Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications, 1999.
- Izetbegovic, 'Alija 'Ali. *Islam Between East and West*. Indianapolis: American Trust Publications, 1984.
- Kepel, Gilles. *Allah in the West: Islamic Movements in America and Europe*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997.
- Lang, Jeffery. *Even Angels Ask: A Journey to Islam in America*. Maryland: Amana Publications, 1997.
- McCloud, Aminah Beverly. *African American Islam*. New York: Routledge, 1995.
- Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *Traditional Islam in the Modern World*. London: Kegan Paul International, 1987.
- Said, Edward. *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World*. Vintage Books, 1997.
- Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books Random House, 1979.

Smith, Jane I. *Islam in America*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.

Turner, Richard Brent. *Islam in the African-American Experience*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997.

# Notes

# Notes



# Islamic Guidance on Human Tolerance

## Section Overview

In this section, participants will be introduced to the Islamic principles and guidance on human tolerance. Participants will attempt to extract the Islamic guidance from stories of the Prophet and *sahabah*. They will, then, relate these principles to their Qur'anic sources.

- Stories of the Prophet and *Sahabah*      *Small Group Activity*
- Islamic Principles & Guidance      *Debriefing & Presentation*
- Qur'anic Sources of Principles      *Individual Activity & Debriefing*

# Concepts

## Tolerance

The Islamic view on tolerance is based in *tawhid*. Belief in *tawhid* includes the belief that there is no deity other than God, the creator of the universe, and that God is unequalled in power, knowledge and wisdom. God is the source of ultimate goodness, and it is not acceptable to believe anything other than good about God. Recognizing God's ultimate goodness leads to recognizing the ultimate goodness of God's creation and plan. All of humanity has been created from a single soul. They are all created with the same nature and God has made that nature essentially good. It is important to respect all of mankind, as they are part of God's creation. It becomes, then, unacceptable to hold hatred and intolerance towards any part of the creation of Allah. The only thing that a Muslim should not tolerate is that which Allah has expressly forbidden.

Humanity has been given freewill, and, with it, the ability to do that which is forbidden, to practice oppression and to commit crimes and transgressions. These forbidden actions must not be tolerated. Nevertheless, an important distinction must be made between the transgression and the individuals. If this is not done, there is a great risk of developing hatred towards part of God's creation, and this can lead to further transgressions. "And let not hatred of some people...lead you to transgression and hostility on your part." (5:2)

## Universality

Refer to Section Two: Human Interaction in the Muslim American Context.

## Diversity

Diversity is an intentional aspect of the creation of Allah. Allah created the world and mankind in such a way so that we could learn valuable lessons about the will of Allah, ourselves, and the rest of creation. Since diversity is deliberate, it must be valued. Furthermore, submission to Allah's will does not demand the eradication of diversity in all realms.

## Trust

Faith teaches us to trust in Allah, and this trust creates safety and assurance. If we trust Allah, then we realize that he will not abandon us nor subject us to that which we cannot bear. This trust of Allah, coupled with an understanding of *fitrah*, also creates trust in ourselves and in others.

## Equality

All of mankind is held to be equal in creation and potentiality. One individual only exceeds another in relation to piety, not in relation to superficial categories such as race, gender, age or class.

## Respect for Allah’s Creation

If we have faith in Allah, we necessarily must respect his creation. The implications of this are broad and include the respect for the environment, as well as respect for fellow members of mankind. Respect implies that we “feel or show deferential regard for; esteem...avoid violation of or interference with...show consideration or appreciation.”<sup>10</sup>

## Allah as Judge

Allah is the final and ultimate judge of all mankind. Although, in societies we may have to judge, to the best of our ability, in accordance with Allah’s will in order to maintain order, this judgment must always be tempered with the recognition that we have incomplete and imperfect knowledge.

## Forgiveness

Allah is the ultimate and most merciful forgiver; he grants forgiveness when sincere repentance is proffered. Individuals should emulate this characteristic to the best of their ability. Furthermore, due to mankind’s incomplete knowledge and understanding, we should not attempt to definitively judge the sincerity of another’s repentance. We should err on the side of caution and leave the rest to Allah.

## Fitrah

This refers to man’s created nature, which in Islam is held to be essentially good. It, also, relates to the fact that on one level, man like the rest of creation, submits automatically to the will of Allah. On another level, man was created with a unique trait, free will. This free will allows us to choose whether or not we conform to Allah’s will in other ways. It is precisely this intentional trait that makes us moral creatures worthy and capable of vicegerency.

## Patience

Patience means that we are steadfast and resolute even in the face of difficulties. Patience is directly connected to trust and faith in Allah. If we believe that Allah is the creator and the best planner than we are patient, with events and other individuals, as the creation and plan unfurls. Patience should not be confused with inactivity; the Qur’an urges us to patiently persevere. Perseverance is a form of action, rather than the lack of action.

<sup>10</sup> Jost, David. *The American Heritage College Dictionary*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993.

## Self-Development/Process

Our lives in this world are perpetually changing, and the struggle to actualize the will of Allah is ongoing. This means that we should be and are constantly in the process of self-development and refinement. Other individuals are also undergoing the same process and may be at different stages than ourselves. This is part of our created nature and therefore it must be respected. Additionally, this principle reflects the Islamic belief that all mankind, and each member of mankind, has the potential and capacity for improvement.

## Self Discipline & Control

In order to act in accordance with Allah's will, we must curb and moderate certain desires and impulses. We must also have discipline in order to fulfill our duties and responsibilities. Discipline and control can manifest in behavior, language, practices, reactions and communication styles. Discipline and control facilitate a social existence that maintains the vision of *tawhid* by preventing man's desires from becoming the central, determining factor.

## Separation of People from Action

This principle teaches us to distinguish between individuals and their actions. Being the creations of Allah, we are not solely defined by our actions, some of which may be good and some of which may be bad. We should not encourage nor tolerate bad behavior, but we must recognize that even when an individual is acting inappropriately or in a blameworthy manner, we are not authorized to act cruelly and meanly towards that individual. We can disapprove of the behavior, without disapproving of the person. The prophets, themselves, serve as ideal role models; they clearly rejected and hated the transgressions of their own people, while, at the same time, they deeply loved them and wanted to assist them.

## Ideal Society/ Madinah Concept

Many of the principles herein described were intended to contribute to the creation and actualization of the ideal Islamic society. By examining a few distinct characteristics of the implementation of these principles in Madinah we can learn valuable lessons about tolerance.

Some of the foundational concepts upon which Madinah was based are affiliation, unity, diversity, central and autonomous rule, common interests, diplomacy and the universality of Islamic norms.

Affiliation - The teachings of Islam in general and the practices of Madinah in particular point to a unique understanding and basis of affiliation. In pre-Islamic society, as is frequently the case in many societies even today, the primary affiliation was determined by ethnic kinship. Islam modified this structure because it placed Allah and obedience to Allah in a central position. Membership in the Islamic community was determined by actualization of the principles of Islam on an individual basis, not by kinship. We see this exemplified in the second *'Aqabah*, when the Prophet asked the people of Yathrib if they would protect him as they protected their own families. The Prophet

Concepts

Islamic Guidance on Human Tolerance

Grounding Workshop

solidified this pledge in the 'Aqabah, and he actualized it upon his arrival in Medina when he instituted *Mu'akhah*. *Mu'akhah* created a system where one *Muhajirun* and one *Ansar* were expected to provide assistance to each other.

**Unity** - This unity does not refer to unity of belief, as we will see when we discuss diversity; rather it refers to unity of the inhabitants of Madinah against any external forces. As we saw in the Constitution of Madinah, all parties had to commit to defending the city against external attack. It also specified that no allegiances should be formed with, nor assistance offered, to enemies of the inhabitants of the city. This unity had to be absolute, and by being so, it provided for security and stability within the diverse city.

**Diversity** - It is important to acknowledge the fact, a fact that many people frequently underestimate, that Madinah was not based upon homogeneity. There was no requirement for ethnic, tribal or religious homogeneity. For example, in the Constitution of Madinah, Muslims, Jews and polytheists were all accorded their respective rights and obligations. No one was forced to change his or her religion or to believe in Islam. The only homogeneity that was demanded was commitment to the Madinah and the founding principles of the Madinah. Interestingly, even this commitment, which was demanded, could be based upon a variety of motivations, including religious belief, economic aspirations or desire for political security and stability.

**Rule**- In Madinah, the Prophet erected a political structure that encompassed both centralized and autonomous rule. Each group, whether it was a kinship group or a religious group, was given a certain level of autonomy and responsibility in dealing with its internal affairs. This autonomy covered local affairs and religious minority issues, but there were certain matters that remained the jurisdiction of the centralized political power of the Prophet. The centralized authority was to provide for any social security needs that could not be met on the local level. Furthermore, certain issues were the exclusive domains of the Prophet's central authority; these included war, peace, and criminal justice. All matters of dispute that could not be resolved locally, were to be referred to the Prophet for resolution.

**Common Interests** - As we touched upon when discussing affiliation, a large component of the foundation of Madinah was based upon recognition of common interests. This recognition began before the Prophet emigrated, when the people of Yathrib, tired of incessant conflict and lack of stability, sought out an arbitrator who would be able to better the situation. This action shows that, although they were not at that point equipped to give up their conflict-causing tribal loyalties, they had recognized the common goal and their common interest in security and ending the conflict. The Prophet furthered the recognition of common interests. He established a society in which the common interests of stability; security from internal aggression, as exemplified by the ban on arms in Madinah; communal defense of any members of the city; limited autonomy; and diversity were paramount. This in turn created buy-in from the many different parties. The Prophet recognized that common interests extended beyond religious affiliation, and that acknowledging and utilizing those interests to create a unified, diverse state was vital.

**Diplomacy** - The Prophet was renowned for his diplomacy in dealing with believers and non-believers alike. He utilized this skill to create cohesion in a diverse community where conflict was frequently a possibility. Diplomacy facilitated the implementation of the other principles of the Madinah that we have already discussed. By consulting different individuals and groups, he showed willingness to discuss and listen.

The Prophet was not an autocratic ruler, who forced his will and decisions upon others. He also recognized the incompatibility of force and coercion with the basic principles and teachings of Islam. He followed the code of diplomatic conduct that was set forth in the Qur'an; a code for communicating and negotiating that

demands first...understanding and sympathy, mildness and moderation, love and understanding as opposed to force and compulsion, arrogance and conceit, intimidation and coercion. It inculcates persuasion as against the display of strength and severity...it demands patience and perseverance. One must proceed slowly and cautiously, one must show tolerance and possess a readiness to understand the point of view of one's opponent; one must aim at winning over his heart; and if one fails to carry conviction after all one's effort, one must remember that there is no coercion in Islam, and one's duty is to convey the message and not necessarily convert one's opponent to one's point of view.<sup>11</sup>

Another important facet of this diplomacy is that it served the functional role of creating and sustaining buy-in in a situation where compromise was not always possible. The Prophet, as the messenger of Allah, was not free to utilize diplomacy to simply effect compromise and consensus based on human interests and desires. There were issues upon which compromise and consensus had no role. Nonetheless, the Prophet was able to use diplomacy in his delivery and institutionalization, thus avoiding the type of conflict, which can easily arise in such a situation.

Universality - Madinah was founded upon the principle that Islamic values are not only applicable to Muslims, but to all people. "One cannot have one set of values for oneself and another for those who do not belong to one's group. Islam lays down definite rules of human conduct in all its spheres. The party concerned may be individual or a community, the matter may be personal or political, the person may be a relative or a stranger, a friend or a foe; he may be inside or outside the fold of race or community; the time may be of peace or war."<sup>12</sup> This characteristic defines the Islamic conception of society, and shows why rights and protections are granted to Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Furthermore, it shows that Islamic values do not become incumbent upon conversion to Islam, but they are perpetually incumbent. General Islamic values are believed to be applicable to all people, regardless of religion or other affiliation.

## Qur'anic Ayats Related to Principles

### Tolerance

... they are themselves a people transgressing beyond bounds! So turn away from them for you are not to blame. 51:53-54

Therefore turn aside from him who turns his back upon Our reminder and does not desire anything but this world's life. 53:29

Nor can goodness and Evil be equal. Repel Evil with what is better: Then will he between whom and thee was hatred become as it were thy friend and intimate! 41:34

<sup>11</sup> Iqbal, Afzal. *The Prophet's Diplomacy: The Art of Negotiation as Conceived and Developed by the Prophet of Islam*. Claude Stark & Co., 1975, p. 96.

<sup>12</sup> Al 'Umari, Akram Diya. *Madinan Society at the Time of the Prophet: Volume I, Its Characteristics and Organization*. Herndon, VA: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1991, p. 98-99.

Say : O ye that reject Faith! I worship not that which ye worship, Nor will ye worship that which I worship. And I will not worship that which ye have been wont to worship, Nor will ye worship that which I worship. To you be your Way, and to me mine. 109:1-6

### Universality

Seest thou not that it is Allah Whose praises all beings in the heavens and on earth do celebrate, and the birds (of the air) with wings outspread? Each one knows its own (mode of) prayer and praise. And Allah knows well all that they do. 24:41

Say: "No reward do I ask of you for this Qur'an, nor am I a pretender. "This is no less than a Message to all the Worlds. 38:86-87

### Diversity/Plurality

If it had been the Lord's will, they would have believed—All who are on earth! Wilt thou then compel mankind, against their will, to believe. 10:99

Mankind was but one nation, but differed later. Had it not been for a word that went forth before from thy Lord, their differences would have been settled between them. 10:19

If thy Lord had so willed, He could have made mankind on people: but they will not cease to dispute. 11:118

Let there be no compulsion in religion, Truth stands out clear from error. Whoever rejects evil and believes in Allah hath grasped the most trustworthy handhold that never breaks. And Allah heareth and knoweth all things. Seest thou not that Allah sends down rain from the sky? With it We then bring out produce of various colors. And in the mountains are tracts white and red, of various shades of color, and black intense in hue. 2:256

And so amongst men and crawling creatures and cattle, are they of various colors. Those truly fear Allah, among His Servants, who have knowledge: for Allah is Exalted in Might, Oft-Forgiving. Those who rehearse the Book of Allah, establish regular Prayer, and spend in Charity out of what We have provided for them, secretly and openly, hope for a commerce that will never fail: For He will pay them their meed, nay, He will give them even more out of His Bounty: for He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Ready to appreciate service. That which We have revealed to thee of the Book is the Truth,- confirming what was revealed before it: for Allah is assuredly- with respect to His Servants - well acquainted and Fully Observant. 35:28-31

To every People have We appointed rites and ceremonies which they must follow: let them not then dispute with thee on the matter, but do thou invite them to thy Lord: for thou art assuredly on the Right Way. 22:67

### Trust

O ye who believe! Call in remembrance the favor of Allah unto you when certain men formed the design to stretch out their hands against you, but Allah held back their hands from you: so fear Allah. And on Allah let believers put all their trust. 5:11

It is part of the Mercy of Allah that thou dost deal gently with them wert thou severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about thee: so pass over Their faults, and ask for Allah's forgiveness for them; and consult them in affairs of moment. Then, when thou hast Taken a decision put thy trust in Allah. For Allah loves those who put their trust in Him. 3:159

He said: "O my people! see ye whether I have a Clear Sign from my Lord, and He hath given me sustenance pure and good as from Himself? I wish not, in opposition to you, to do that which I forbid you to do. I only desire your betterment to the best of my power; and my success in my task can only come from Allah. In Him I trust, and unto Him I look. 11:88

O ye who believe! Avoid suspicion as much as possible: for suspicion in some cases is a sin: And spy not on each other behind their backs. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Nay, ye would abhor it...But fear Allah: For Allah is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful. 49:12

### Equality

It is He Who created you from a single person, and made his mate of like nature, in order that he might dwell with her in love. 7:189

O mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know each other. Not that ye may despise each other. Verily, the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted with all things. 49:13

O mankind! reverence your Guardian-Lord, who created you from a single person, created, of like nature, His mate, and from them twain scattered like seeds countless men and women;- reverence Allah, through whom ye demand your mutual rights, and reverence the wombs That bore you: for Allah ever watches over you. 4:1

For Muslim men and women,- for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in Charity, for men and women who fast and deny themselves, for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah's praise,- for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward. 33:35

### Respect for Allah's Creation

There is not an animal that lives on the earth, nor a being that flies on its wings, but forms part of communities like you. Nothing have we omitted from the Book, and they all shall be gathered to their Lord in the end. 6:38

Who made good everything that He has created, and He began the creation of man from dust. 32:7

### Allah is the Judge

He knows what is before them and what is behind them: and to Allah go back all questions for decision. 22:76

And if there is a party among you who believes in the message with which I have been sent, and a party which does not believe, hold yourselves in patience until Allah doth decide between us: for He is the best to decide. 7:87

### Forgiveness

And let not those who possess dignity and ease among you swear not to give to the near of kin and to the needy, and to fugitives for the cause of Allah. Let them forgive and show indulgence. Yearn ye not that Allah may forgive you? Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. 24:22

Whatever ye are given here is but a convenience of this life: but that which is with Allah is better and

more lasting: it is for those who believe and put their trust in their Lord: Those who avoid the greater crimes and shameful deeds, and, when they are angry even then forgive. 42:36-37

But indeed if any show patience and forgive, that would truly be an exercise of courageous will and resolution in the conduct of affairs. 42:43

Tell those who believe, to forgive those who do not look forward to the Days of Allah: It is for Him to recompense for good or ill each People according to what they have earned. 45:14

### *Fitrah*

So set thou thy face steadily and truly to the Faith: establish Allah's handiwork according to the pattern on which He has made mankind: no change let there be in the work wrought by Allah: that is the standard Religion: but most among mankind understand not. 30:30

Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: "I will create a vicegerent on earth." They said: "Wilt Thou place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood?- whilst we do celebrate Thy praises and glorify Thy holy name?" He said: "I know what ye know not." 2:30

Allah desires that He should make light your burdens, for man was created weak. 4:28

Verily We have created man into toil and struggle. 90:4

We have indeed created man in the best of moulds... 95:4

### *Patience*

O ye who believe! When ye go abroad in the cause of Allah, investigate carefully, and say not to any one who offers you a salutation: "Thou art none of a believer!" Coveting the perishable goods of this life: with Allah are profits and spoils abundant. Even thus were ye yourselves before, till Allah conferred on you His favors: Therefore carefully investigate. For Allah is well aware of all that ye do. 4:94

Man is a creature of haste: soon enough will I show you My Signs; then ye will not ask Me to hasten them! 21:37

Therefore patiently persevere, as did all messengers of inflexible purpose; and be in no haste about the Unbelievers. 46:35

And if ye do catch them out, catch them out no worse than they catch you out: But if ye show patience, that is indeed the best course for those who are patient. And do thou be patient, for thy patience is but from Allah; nor grieve over them: and distress not thyself because of their plots. For Allah is with those who restrain themselves, and those who do good. 16:126-128

Man is a creature of haste: soon enough will I show you My Signs; then ye will not ask Me to hasten them! 21:37

I swear by the time, Verily Man is in loss, Except such as have Faith, and do righteous deeds, and join together in the mutual teaching of Truth, and of Patience and Constancy. 103:1-3

### *Self-Development/Process*

By the Soul, and the proportion and order given to it; And its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right;- Truly he succeeds that purifies it or causes it to grow... 91:1-9

Save him who shall repent and believe and do right. Such will enter the Garden, and they will not be wronged in aught... 19:60

### Self Discipline

...and let not the hatred of some people in once shutting you out of the Sacred Mosque lead you to transgression and hostility on your part. 5:2

O ye who believe! stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety: and fear Allah. For Allah is well acquainted with all that ye do. 5:8

We ordained for the Children of Israel that if any one slew a person - unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land - it would be as if he slew the whole people: and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people. 5:32

### Separation of People from Action

And as for the two of you who are guilty thereof, punish them both. And if they repent and improve, then let them be. Lo! Allah is ever relenting, Merciful. 4:16

### Ideal Society

Allah doth command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due; And when ye judge between man and man, that ye judge with justice: Verily how excellent is the teaching which He giveth you! For Allah is He Who heareth and seeth all things. 4:58

O ye people! Eat of what is on earth, Lawful and good; and do not follow the footsteps of the evil one, for he is to you an avowed enemy. 2:168

Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity. 3:104

## Activities

Stories of the Prophet & *Sahabah*

Islamic Messages on Human Tolerance

## Stories of the Prophet & Sahabah

### Story # 1: Last Sermon of the Prophet

“O People, Lend me an attentive ear, for I know not whether after this year, I shall ever be amongst you again. Therefore listen to what I am saying to you very carefully and take these words to those who could not be present here today.

O People, Just as you regard this month, this day, this city as sacred, so regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust. Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners. Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you. Remember that you will indeed meet your Lord, and that He will indeed reckon your deeds. Allah has forbidden you to take usury (interest); therefore all interest obligations shall henceforth be waived. Your capital, however, is yours to keep. You will neither inflict nor suffer any inequity.

Allah has Judged that there shall be no interest and that all interest due to Abbas Ibn ‘Abd al Muttalib (the Prophet's uncle) shall henceforth be waived.

Beware of Satan for the safety of your religion. He has lost all hope that he will ever be able to lead you astray in big things, so beware of following him in small things.

O People, It is true that you have certain rights in regard to your women, but they also have rights over you. Remember that you have taken them as your wives, only under Allah's trust and with His permission. If they abide by your right then to them belongs the right to be fed and clothed in kindness. Do treat you women well and be kind to them, for they are your partners and committed helpers. And it is your right that they do not make friends with anyone of whom you do not approve, as well as never to be unchaste.

O People, Listen to me in earnest, worship Allah, say your five daily prayers (*salah*), fast during the month of Ramadan, and give your wealth in *Zakat*. Perform *Hajj* if you can afford to.

All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over a black, nor a black has any superiority over a white- except by piety and good action. Learn that every Muslim is a brother to every Muslim and that the Muslims constitute one brotherhood. Nothing shall be legitimate to a Muslim, which belongs to a fellow Muslim unless it was given freely and willingly. Do not therefore, do injustice to yourselves.

Remember one day you will appear before Allah and answer for your deeds. So beware, do not stray from the path of righteousness after I am gone. People, no prophet or apostle will come after me and no new faith will be born. Reason well therefore, O people, and understand words which I convey to you. I leave behind me two things, the Qur’an and the *Sunnah (Hadith)*, and if you follow these you will never go astray. All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again; and may the last ones understand my words better than those who listened to me directly. Be my witness, O Allah, that I have conveyed your message to your people.”<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Excerpted from: <http://www.soundvision.com/info/hajj/lastsermon.asp>

## Story #2: Muhammad Offers Himself to the Tribes

Islamic Guidance on Human Tolerance

Grounding Workshop

The news of the injuries inflicted upon Muhammad lightened the hostility of the tribes but it never succeeded in moving them to follow him. The Quraysh knew that and increased their injuries. Nothing, however, could dissuade Muhammad from continuing his call. At every season, whenever the tribes of Arabia came to Makkah, he offered himself and his cause to them, informed them that he was a commissioned prophet, and asked them to believe in him. His uncle 'Abd al 'Uzza, son of 'Abd al Muttalib, otherwise known as Abu Lahab, would not let him; he would follow Muhammad everywhere he went to dissuade the people from listening to him. Muhammad, for his part, did not only preach his religion to the tribes in the pilgrimage season in Makkah, but sought those tribes in their own quarters. He visited the tribe of Kindah and the tribe of Kalb, of Banu Hanifah, Banu 'Amir ibn Sa'sa'ah, each in its own province. None of them responded favorably to him, and they all repudiated his call-sometimes with insults, as did the tribe of Banu Hanifah. The tribe of Banu 'Amir felt more ambitious and imagined that they could assume a position of leadership should the cause of Muhammad triumph. But when Muhammad told them, "The matter belongs wholly to God; He places leadership wheresoever He wishes," they turned away and repudiated his call like the rest. Did all these tribes repudiate Muhammad's call for the same reasons for which Quraysh did before them? We have seen the disappointment of the tribe of Banu 'Amir upon the frustration of their ambition of leadership and power. As for the tribe of Thaqif, they had a different opinion. In addition to the cool atmosphere and vineyards which made it a summer resort, the city of Ta'if was the center of worship of al Lat, for it was in its midst that the idol stood and on its account the city had become a place of pilgrimage. Should the tribe of Thaqif follow Muhammad, the goddess al Lat would lose her place of worship, the city its pilgrimage site, and ensuing hostility with Quraysh would soon cut off all summer visits by the Makkans. Every tribe had thus its own reason, economic or other, for which it refused to accept Islam besides the personal attachment to the religion of the fathers and the worship of old idols.<sup>14</sup>

## Story #3: Muhammad's Excursion to Ta'if (628 C.E.)

The Quraysh doubled and redoubled their injuries to Muhammad and his followers until Muhammad could bear it no longer. Alone, and without telling anyone, he undertook a trip to the city of Ta'if where he solicited the support of the tribe of Thaqif after calling them to Islam. When they refused, he asked them not to spread the news of their refusal to his enemies that they might not rejoice at his failure. The tribe of Thaqif, however, not only repudiated Muhammad's call but sent their servants to insult him and throw him out of their city. He ran away from them and took shelter near a wall which belonged to 'Utbah and Shaybah, sons of Rabi'ah. There, he sat under a Vine pondering his defeat, within sight of the sons of Rabi'ah. He raised his hands to heaven and prayed with noticeable pain: 'O God, please consider my weakness, my shortage of means, and the little esteem that people have of me. Oh, most Merciful God, You are the Lord of the oppressed, and You are my Lord. To whom would You leave my fate? To a stranger who insults me? Or to an enemy who dominates me? Would I that You have no wrath against me! Your pleasure alone is my objective. Under the light of Your faith which illuminates all darkness and on which this world and the other depend, I take my refuge. I pray that I may not become the object of Your wrath and anger. To You alone belongs the right

<sup>14</sup> Excerpted from: Haykal, Muhammad Husein. *The Life of Muhammad*. Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, p. 138.



# Islamic Messages on Human Tolerance

Read each verse carefully. Write the number of the principle, listed below, next to the related Qur'anic *ayah*.

## Qur'anic Ayats

For Muslim men and women,- for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in Charity, for men and women who fast (and deny themselves), for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah's praise,- for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward. 33:35

And let not those who possess dignity and ease among you swear not to give to the near of kin and to the needy, and to fugitives for the cause of Allah. Let them forgive and show indulgence. Yearn ye not that Allah may forgive you? Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. 24:22

By the Soul, and the proportion and order given to it; And its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right;- Truly he succeeds that purifies it (or causes it to grow)... 91:1-9

And as for the two of you who are guilty thereof, punish them both. And if they repent and improve, then let them be. Lo! Allah is ever relenting, Merciful. 4:16

Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: "I will create a vicegerent on earth." They said: "Wilt Thou place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood?- whilst we do celebrate Thy praises and glorify Thy holy (name)?" He said: "I know what ye know not." 2:30

Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity. 3:104

Say: "No reward do I ask of you for this (Qur'an), nor am I a pretender. "This is no less than a Message to (all) the Worlds. 38:86-87

To every People have We appointed rites and ceremonies which they must follow: let them not then dispute with thee on the matter, but do thou invite (them) to thy Lord: for thou art assuredly on the Right Way. 22:67

And if there is a party among you who believes in the message with which I have been sent, and a party which does not believe, hold yourselves in patience until Allah doth decide between us: for He is the best to decide. 7:87

O ye who believe! stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety: and fear Allah. For Allah is well acquainted with all that ye do. 5:8

Who made good everything that He has created, and He began the creation of man from dust. 32:7

And if ye do catch them out, catch them out no worse than they catch you out: But if ye show patience, that is indeed the best (course) for those who are patient. And do thou be patient, for thy patience is but from Allah; nor grieve over them: and distress not thyself because of their plots. For Allah is with those who restrain themselves, and those who do good. 16:126-128

Say : O ye that reject Faith! I worship not that which ye worship, Nor will ye worship that which I worship. And I will not worship that which ye have been wont to worship, Nor will ye worship that which I worship. To you be your Way, and to me mine. 109:1-6

O ye who believe! Call in remembrance the favor of Allah unto you when certain men formed the design to stretch out their hands against you, but (Allah) held back their hands from you: so fear Allah. And on Allah let believers put (all) their trust. 5:11

1. Tolerance
2. Universality
3. Diversity
4. Trust
5. Equality
6. Respect for Allah's Creation

7. Allah as Judge
8. Forgiveness
9. *Fitrah*
10. Patience
11. Self-Development

12. Self-Discipline
13. Separation of People from Action
14. Ideal Society

Activities

Islamic Guidance on Human Tolerance

Grounding Workshop

## Bibliography

Al'Alwani, Taha Jabir. *The Ethics of Disagreement in Islam*, tr. Abdul Wahid Hamid. Herndon, VA: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2000.

Abou El Fadl, Khaled. *Tolerance in Islam*. Beacon Press, 2002.

Al Faruqi, Isma'il Raji. *Al Tawhid: Its Implications for Thought and Life*. Herndon, VA: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2000, p. 46-48.

Al-Faruqi, Isma'il Raji. *Islam and Other Faiths*. Herndon, VA: The Islamic Foundation and The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1998.

Al-Faruqi, Isma'il and Lois Lamy al-Faruqi. *The Cultural Atlas of Islam*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1986.

Al Umari, Akram Diya. *Madinan Society at the Time of the Prophet*. Herndon, VA: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1991.

Abdullah, Aslam. *Morals and Manners: An Islamic Perspective* (Adapted and compiled from Muhammad Al-Ghazali's *Khuluq al Muslim*). Plainfield, IN: Islamic Society of North America, 1997, chaps. 14: "Tolerance and Pardon," 15: "Keep your Heart Free from Rancor and Enmity," and 16: "Punishment for Moral Crimes."

Emerick, Yahiya. *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Understanding Islam*. Indianapolis: Alpha, 2002.

Esposito, John. *The Oxford History of Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Ghazali, Aidit Bin Hj. *Islam and Justice*. Malaysia: Institut Kefahaman Islam, Institute of Islamic Understanding, 1993.

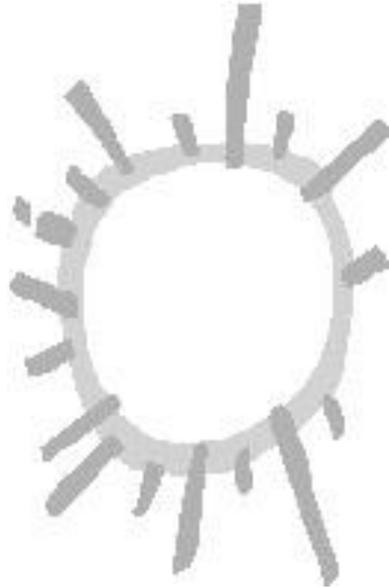
Iqbal, Afzal. *The Prophet's Diplomacy: The Art of Negotiation as Conceived and Developed by the Prophet of Islam*. Cape Cod, Massachusetts: Claude Stark & Company, 1975.

Lang, Jeffery. *Even Angels Ask: A Journey to Islam in America*. Maryland: Amana Publications, 1997.

Mohamed, Yasien. *Fitrah: The Islamic Concept of Human Nature*. London: Ta-Ha Publishers Ltd., 1996.

# Notes

# Notes



# Islamic Methodology

## Section Overview

In this section, participants will learn about the importance of methodology in understanding the Islamic guidance and messages. They will also learn about the rich history of Islamic methodology and its foundational principles. Participants will, then, reflect upon and discuss possible modern challenges to the effective utilization of methodology.

- Why Do We Need Methodology? *Group Discussion*
- Foundations of Islamic Methodology *Presentation*
- Modern Challenges to Effective Utilization of Methodology *Role-Play & Group Discussion*

# Concepts

## Methodology

In general, methodology refers to a systematized set of principles and practices that are employed in a certain discipline or field of research. Islamic methodology follows this definition, but it refers specifically to the methodology that is employed to: understand the Qur'an; understand the *sunnah*; authenticate the *sunnah*; understand the role of *ijtihad* (independent, informed reasoning); understanding the role of *qiyas* (analogy); understand the role of *'ijma* (consensus); understand the role of accepted practices; understand the context; and understand the relationship between all of the different sources of knowledge. Islamic methodology has a rich and long history that stretches back and finds its roots in the time and practices of the Prophet. There are disagreements over some aspects of methodology, and this contributed to the development of different legal schools, *mathahib*.

## Knowledge of Sources

Islamic methodology demands an in-depth knowledge of the sources, including Qur'an, *hadith*, *'ijma*, *qiyas* and *ijtihad*. Such knowledge includes extensive understanding of the intricacies and nuances of the classical Arabic language. In addition, knowledge of the sources involves: knowledge of the context and nature of the revelation of the Qur'an; knowledge of the nature, context and authenticity of the *sunnah*; and knowledge of the nature and qualifications of other sources.

## Relationship of Sources

Another key aspect of Islamic methodology is the understanding of the relationship of the sources. Relationship here refers to the degree of primacy and authenticity of each source in relation to the others. It, also, refers to which sources are held to be more authoritative and therefore serve as the final source in cases of contradiction. All Muslims agree that the Qur'an is the primary, constitutive and most authentic source; the Qur'an is protected by Allah. The majority agrees that the *ahadith* are a secondary, explanatory source. The *ahadith* are not completely authentic, and therefore they are subjected to methodological scrutiny, including comparison and reference to the Qur'an in cases of contradiction or inconsistency. It must be acknowledged that various groups have different opinions regarding the relationship of the secondary sources, including the *ahadith*, *qiyas*, *'ijma* and *ijtihad*.

## Context

Context refers to the specific situation in which a part of the Qur'an was revealed. It also refers to the specific situation in which the Prophet took action, made a statement or gave tacit approval. In addition to the specific situation, context also has to do with the larger picture of the environment, culture/tradition, knowledge base and experience of people during a specific era or in a geographical area. Context is a necessary component of methodology because it facilitates understanding, interpretation and distinction between universals and specifics. This is important in regard to the revelation of the Qur'an and the life of the Prophet, and it is also important in relation to the different scholars and *mathahib*.

## Islamic Values/Worldview

We have already described the Islamic worldview (Section Two: Human Interaction in the Muslim American Context) and Islamic guidance related to tolerance (Section Three; Islamic Guidance on Human Tolerance). A sound grounding in and understanding of the worldview and values is vital to methodology because it provides an interpretative guide, as well as a guide upon which to negate and dismiss guidance and fabrications that contradict the basic principles. This helps us to “see the forest through the trees.”

## Simplistic Dualism of *Halal* & *Haram*

An understanding of Islamic methodology can help us to avoid the simplistic dualism of permitted, *halal* and forbidden, *haram*. This dualism negates the complexities of legal and non-legal rulings and guidance, all of which are determined on a spectrum that includes not only *halal* and *haram*, but other gradations such as encouraged and discouraged. Oversimplifications can be risky in thought and in practice, and they also neglect the rich tradition and purpose of Islamic methodology.

## Overemphasis on Legalism

Frequently an overemphasis is placed on the legal aspects of the sources and the legal rulings of various scholars. While these are important aspects of the Islamic tradition, we should be careful to not neglect the other guidance provided by the primary sources and scholars.

## Tradition/Culture

Tradition refers to inherited ways of thinking and acting. Traditions can be thought of as the norms of the society. Everyone has tradition, and religion is frequently one component in tradition. A problem arises when these traditions are confused with Islam. We all have the inclination to follow “the ways of our fathers.” Often this is done “religiously;” traditions are given equal or greater weight than Islam. Those who come from cultures where Islam is deeply embedded in the tradition often are unaware of the distinction between Islam and tradition; they may believe that many traditional practices are part of Islam, while in fact those practices may even violate Islamic principles. From an Islamic perspective, this is a very serious and problematic issue. Failing to differentiate between tradition and Islam can lead to transgressions and unnecessary hardships. It is essential to distinguish between Islam and other traditions because failing to do so can cause perversion of Islam. Islam allows for and promotes the maintenance and practice of diverse cultural traditions and norms, so long as they do not violate the tenants of Islam and are not given a role equal to or greater than Islam. We should give tradition its rightful place in our lives, and recognize and respect its value, but we, also, must maintain an awareness of the line between Islam and tradition.

## Activities

Why Do We Need Methodology?

Modern Challenges to Effective Utilization of Methodology

# Why Do We Need Methodology?

Please share your thoughts on the following questions.

1. Why do we need methodology?
2. What does methodology help us do?
3. What does methodology prevent us from doing?

# Modern Challenges to Effective Utilization of Methodology

Watch the role play and write your thoughts on the following questions. We will then discuss them as a group.

1. What are some challenges we face in effectively utilizing methodology? What makes it difficult for us, as individuals and groups, to utilize methodology?

2. Why is it important to recognize these challenges?

## Bibliography

Al Alwani, Taha Jabir. *Usul Al Fiqh Al Islami: Source Methodology in Islamic Jurisprudence*. Herndon, Virginia: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2000.

Al-Faruqi, Isma'il. *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan*. Herndon, VA: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1989.

Al-Faruqi, Isma'il and Lois Lamy' al-Faruqi. *The Cultural Atlas of Islam*. New York: MacMillian Publishing Company, 1986.

Al Qaradawi, Yusuf. *Islamic Awakening Between Rejection and Extremism*. American Trust Publication, 1991.

Brown, Daniel. *Rethinking Tradition in Modern Islamic Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Emerick, Yahiya. *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Understanding Islam*. Indianapolis: Alpha, 2002.

Esposito, John. *The Oxford History of Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Gleave, R. *Islamic Law: Theory and Practice*. London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1997.

Hamilton, Charles. *The Hedaya: Mussulman Laws*. Delhi, India: Islamic Book Trust, 1982.

Ibn Rushd. *The Distinguished Jurist's Primer, Bidayat al-Mujtahid*. Garnet Publishers Limited, 1994.

International Commission of Jurists. *University of Kuwait and Union of Arab Lawyers (Seminar Report)*, 1980.

Kadduri, Majid. *Al-Shafi'i's Risala: Treatise on the Foundation of Islamic Jurisprudence*. Islamic Text Society, 1993.

Kamali, Mohammad Hashim. *Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence*. Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1991, Chapter 14: "'Urf (Custom)."

Keller, Nuh Ha Mim. *Reliance of the Traveler: A Classical Manual of Islamic Sacred Law*. Evanston, IL: Sunna Books, 1994.

Koya, P.K. ed. *Hadith and Sunnah: Ideals and Realities*. Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 1996.

Lang, Jeffery. *Even Angels Ask: A Journey to Islam in America*. Maryland: Amana Publications, 1997.

Masud, Muhammad Khalid. *Shatibi's Philosophy of Islamic Law*. Kitab Bhavan, 1997.

Mumisa, Michael. *Islamic Law Theory and Interpretation*. Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications, 2002.

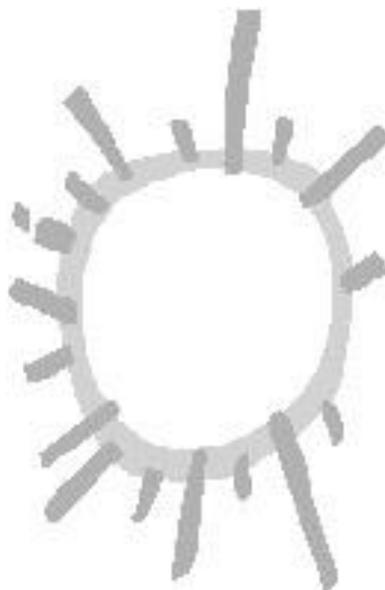
Schacht, Joseph. *An Introduction to Islamic Law*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.

Siddiqi, Muhammad Zubayr. *Hadith Literature: Its Origin, Development and Special Features*. Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 1993.

Weiss, Bernard G. *The Search for God's law Islamic Jurisprudence in the Writings of Sayf al-Din al-Amidi*. Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 1992.

# Notes

# Notes



**What About...?**

## Section Overview

In this section, participants will identify certain tolerance related issues/topics that are commonly misunderstood and misinterpreted by both Muslims and non-Muslims. Participants will learn how methodology can assist them in better understanding the issues/topics and the misunderstandings/misinterpretations of the issues. Finally, participants will review and gain an understanding of certain issues/topics.

- Misunderstandings and Methodology *Presentation*
- Commonly Misunderstood or Misinterpreted Issues *Group Discussion & Small Group Activity*
- Review of Issues *Presentation & Debriefing*

## Concepts

### Misunderstood, Misinterpreted, Problematic Issues

There are certain topics related to human tolerance that are frequently misunderstood, misinterpreted and seen as problematic. These concepts typically relate to relationships with others and war. Following are clarifications of some common topics.

#### *Jihad*

*Jihad* is a term that has become very controversial. The frequent translation as “holy war” perpetuates the idea that Muslims should fight everyone who is not Muslim. However, the actual meaning of the word in Arabic indicates striving or working with full determination and effort towards something. It is never used in Arabic to indicate simply war or killing. Any effort that is undertaken with the sincere desire to please God is *jihad*. Therefore, *jihad* includes a wide range of activities such as controlling ones desires; pursuing knowledge; delivering and raising children; and combating social ills. Fighting can be a legitimate form of *jihad* in some circumstances as indicated by the following verses.

“Let those fight in the cause of Allah Who sell the life of this world for the hereafter. To him who fighteth in the cause of Allah - whether he is slain or gets victory - Soon shall We give him a reward of great value. And why should ye not fight in the cause of Allah and of those who, being weak, are ill-treated and oppressed? - Men, women, and children, whose cry is: "Our Lord! Rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from thee one who will protect; and raise for us from thee one who will help!" Those who believe fight in the cause of Allah, and those who reject faith fight in the cause of Evil: So fight ye against the friends of Satan.” (4:74-76)

Some other verses, taken out of context, have fuelled the “holy war” interpretation not only among Muslims, but among those who have hatred or fear in their hearts and do not have a firm grasp of the Qur’anic guidance on human relations and tolerance. Among the infamously misquoted verses is: “But when the forbidden months are past, then fight and slay the pagans wherever you find them.” (9:5)

Within the Qur’anic context, the word *mushrikun* is constantly used to refer to the Arab pagans, but not all pagans were killed. In fact, some of them were in alliance with the Prophet. This is understood from the context of the surrounding verses and the historical reality of how the Prophet acted upon revelation. 9:5 is talking about specific *mushrikun*, who violated their treaty, killed the Muslims and escaped to the mountains. If one read the verse in the context of surrounding verses, it would be clear that not all pagans were meant to be killed: “But the treaties are not dissolved with those pagans with whom ye have entered into alliance and who have not subsequently failed you in aught, nor aided any one against you, so fulfill your engagements with them to the end of their term: for Allah loveth the righteous.” (9:4)

There is line that must be observed in determining the permissibility of fighting, and, repeatedly, the Qur’an reminds us that we should fear Allah, purify our hearts and avoid practicing oppression and transgression: “Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for Allah loveth not the transgressors.” (2:190)

## Kafir

The concept of *kafir*, disbelief, is not a simple monolithic concept. Rather, it includes a variety of levels. The first meaning is straying, *dadal*. This means a state of bewilderment or ignorance of one's way; be the geographical, or spiritual. Such straying and ignorance could be the result of forgetfulness. Hence, what the individual needs is to be reminded and guided. The second meaning refers to the individual who, when guidance reaches him and the path becomes clear, may accept it and submit to it (become Muslim), or recognize the light of truth but decide to conceal and bury it. The latter is the literal meaning of *kufr*. The third meaning relates to the individual who outwardly declares his submission to the Islamic system, without sincere, inner belief. This refers to the Qur'anic definition of a hypocrite. The fourth meaning is the individual who does not declare himself a Muslim, and refuses to publicly engage in any serious dialogue. This individual is *mutawali*, one who turns his away. This is a type of disbelief. The fifth meaning relates to the individual who goes beyond *tawali*, a simple, negative position; they go from merely denying God's signs and bounties to ascribing them to other sources. This is polytheism, *shirk*. It is also called *zulm*, injustice, and *israf*, transgression. Finally, the last meaning relates to the individual who moves from merely denying the message to scorning it; harming its adherents; provoking them; undertaking direct action to compel them to disown it; preventing others from embracing it; et cetera. These hostile actions qualify the unbeliever as a belligerent individual, against whom *jihad* becomes lawful.

## Relationships with People of the Book

The Qur'an gives the title of the "People of the Book" to those who follow the revelations sent by God to earlier prophets, namely the Christians and the Jews. The stories of their prophets and their histories are well documented in the Qur'an, illustrating both the blessings that God bestowed upon them and their mistakes. Islam has a close spiritual kinship with the People of the Book, since all of the religions are based originally on revelation from God through prophets. Based on this closeness, Prophet Muhammad hoped greatly that the People of the Book would accept his message as the continuation of what they had received from Moses and Jesus. He was disappointed by their initial rejection. Despite the fact that the People of the Book generally reject the Qur'an, the Qur'an describes them by saying that among them are some that are sincere in faith, piety and righteousness and who do good.

Generally, Islam seeks to have good relations with the People of the Book, working towards shared goals and values for society: "Say: 'Oh People of the Book! Come to common terms as between us and you: that we worship none but God; that we associate not partners with Him...'" (3:64)

However, when they abandon their religious values and practice injustice, oppression or aggression, it is permissible to fight them. Such a situation happened during the time the Qur'an was being revealed. Some Christian Arab tribes, who were in alliance with the Romans, attacked the trade caravans of the Muslims and killed some of them. The murder of some Muslim leaders and a messenger sent to the King of Basra led to the first armed conflict between Christians and Muslims. It was in this context that the following was revealed: "Fight those who believe not in God nor the last day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by God and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of truth, from among the People of the Book, until they pay the *jizyah* with willing submission, feeling themselves subdued." (9:29) Permission to fight was given, in this case, because they had transgressed what was forbidden, they had committed acts of war. The verse indicates that they should be fought until they are no

Concepts

What About...?

Grounding Workshop

longer a threat or a disruption to the society, until they decide to submit themselves to the rule of law and become tax-paying citizens. They should not be fought indefinitely or in every situation.

### Relationships with Pagans

Pagans, *mushrikin* in the Qur'an, are those to associate partners with God, that is to say they believe in and worship more than one deity. The absolute essence of Islam is *tawhid*, and polytheism is in direct opposition with this. According to the Qur'an and the Islamic view, the worst sin is to associate partners with God. Much of the mission of Prophet Muhammad was aimed at clearing up the confusion of polytheistic ideas and guiding people to abandon worship of that which is powerless. However, even at the point of greatest opposition, the Qur'an is clear that there is no compulsion in religion and to those who adamantly refuse Islam we should say "to you is your way and to me is mine." (109:6) We should be respectful of others' religions, not insulting them and, consequentially, not inviting insults upon ourselves. While polytheism is not acceptable, we must acknowledge that the pagans remain part of God's creation with the same human nature and potential as Muslims or anyone else. We should, also, keep in mind that the Islamic position is to refrain from fighting these groups as long as they refrain from fighting Muslims. Adherence to a different religion is not a reason for a just Islamic war.

### Islamic State/Madinah Concept

Historical attempts and modern day examples of the Islamic states, in many ways, fall short of the Islamic ideal society. We must not mistake such shortcomings as inherent flaws in the Islamic vision as outlined in the Qur'an and exemplified in Madinah. To clarify misunderstandings on the nature of the Islamic state it is helpful to revisit the example of Madinah. (Section Three: Islamic Guidance on Human Tolerance.)

# Activities

Misunderstood, Misinterpreted, & Problematic Issues

## Misunderstood, Misinterpreted, & Problematic Issues

In small groups discuss one of the misunderstood, misinterpreted or problematic issues. Choose one of you to write summaries of responses.

1. What is your understanding of the issue? Why is it misunderstood, misinterpreted or problematic?
2. What are the tolerance-related implications of this issue in the Muslim American context?
3. How can methodology help to address misunderstandings, misinterpretations and problems associated with this issue?

## Bibliography

Al-Faruqi, Isma'il Raji. *Islam and Other Faiths*. Herndon, VA: The Islamic Foundation and The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1998.

Al-Faruqi, Isma'il and Lois Lamy' al-Faruqi. *The Cultural Atlas of Islam*. New York: MacMillian Publishing Company, 1986.

Al Qaradawi, Yusuf. *Islamic Awakening Between Rejection and Extremism*. American Trust Publication, 1991.

Al Umari, Akram Diya. *Madinan Society at the Time of the Prophet*. Herndon, VA: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1991.

Emerick, Yahiya. *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Understanding Islam*. Indianapolis: Alpha, 2002.

Esposito, John. *The Oxford History of Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Ghazali, Aidit Bin Hj. *Islam and Justice*. Malaysia: Institut Kefahaman Islam, Institute of Islamic Understanding, 1993.

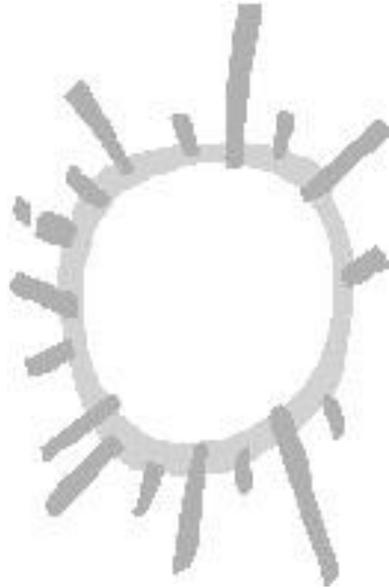
Haddad, Yvonne Yazbeck. *Christian-Muslim Encounters*. Tampa, FL: University of Florida Press, 1995.

Lang, Jeffery. *Even Angels Ask: A Journey to Islam in America*. Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications, 1997.

Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *Traditional Islam in the Modern World*. London: Kegan Paul International, 1987.

# Notes

# Notes



# En“LIGHT”ened Communication & Interaction

## Section Overview

In this section, participants will learn how Islamic guidance on human tolerance can and should inform and guide their interaction with other individuals, Muslim and non-Muslim alike. Participants will explore what such action entails, and they will reflect on certain hypothetical situations in an effort to refine skills of assessment. Finally, participants will discuss what they have learned and what they would like to be able to do.

- Embodying Islamic Guidance *Presentation*
  
- Utilizing Islamic Guidance to Understand Interaction *Role Plays & Discussion*
  
- What You Learned & What You Want to Be Able to Do *Group Discussion & Closure*

# Concepts

## En“LIGHT”ened Communication & Interaction

This is a primary goal of Project L.I.G.H.T. En“LIGHT”enment in this context is the embodiment of Islamic guidance on human tolerance. This embodiment informs and shapes the way that we communicate and interact with others, be they Muslim or non-Muslim.

## Assessment Before Action and Reaction

Before we take action or react to any situation, it is necessary to first assess the situation and the factors at play in the situation. The ability to assess any situation requires knowledge and guidance. In this workshop, the knowledge necessary for assessing interactions related to tolerance from an Islamic point of view has been explored and discussed.

## Your Duty to Allah

Remember your duty to Allah comes first. You are an ambassador of Islam.

## Develop an En“LIGHT”ened Attitude

In order to develop an en“LIGHT”ened attitude, you must remove negative feelings such as anger, blame, fear, guilt, et cetera; become aware of your own bias, stereotypes and baggage; and attach yourself to *ihsan* - faith, compassion, understanding.

## En“LIGHT”ened Behavior & Actions

Make your actions, words and all aspects of your demeanor reflective of an en“LIGHT”ened attitude.

## Activities

Utilizing Islamic Guidance to Understand Interaction

What You Learned & What You Want to Be Able to Do





## Bibliography

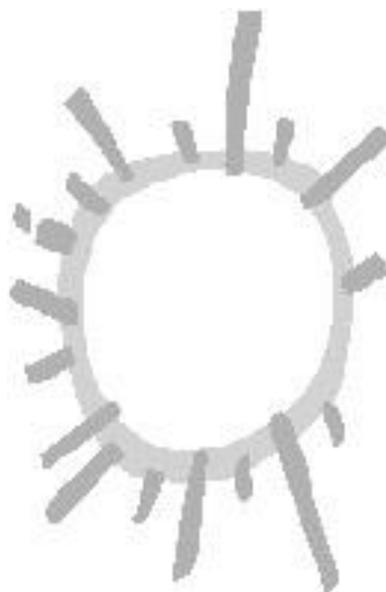
Romancucci-Ross, Lola and George De Vos ed. *Ethnic Identity: Creation, Conflict, and Accommodation*. London: AltaMira Press, 1995.

Rubin, Jeffery Z. *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate, and Settlement*. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1994.

Lang, Jeffery. *Even Angels Ask: A Journey to Islam in America*. Maryland: Amana Publications, 1997.

# Notes

# Notes



# Activity Results

# Activities

In this section, you will find an anonymous compilation of the results from each activity. This section aims to serve as a record that participants can reflect upon and utilize in future sessions and trainings.

## Human Interaction

Identity Flower

What Are You Not?

## Human Interaction in the Muslim American Context

Muslims & Other Groups in America

## Islamic Guidance on Human Tolerance

Stories of the Prophet & *Sahabah*

Islamic Messages on Human Tolerance

## Islamic Methodology

Why Do We Need Methodology?

Modern Challenges to Effective Utilization of Methodology

## What About...?

Misunderstood, Misinterpreted, & Problematic Issues

## En“LIGHT”ened Communication & Interaction

Utilizing Islamic Guidance to Understand Interaction

What You Learned & What You Want to Be Able to Do

# Islamic Messages on Human Tolerance

Read each verse carefully. Write the number of the principle, listed below, next to the related Qur'anic *ayah*.

## Qur'anic Ayats

For Muslim men and women,- for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in Charity, for men and women who fast (and deny themselves), for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah's praise,- for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward. 33:35 Equality (5)

And let not those who possess dignity and ease among you swear not to give to the near of kin and to the needy, and to fugitives for the cause of Allah. Let them forgive and show indulgence. Yearn ye not that Allah may forgive you? Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. 24:22 Forgiveness

By the Soul, and the proportion and order given to it; And its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right;- Truly he succeeds that purifies it (or causes it to grow)... 91:1-9 Self Devel.

And as for the two of you who are guilty thereof, punish them both. And if they repent and improve, then let them be. Lo! Allah is ever relenting, Merciful. 4:16 Sep Action from People

Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: "I will create a vicegerent on earth." They said: "Wilt Thou place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood?- whilst we do celebrate Thy praises and glorify Thy holy (name)?" He said: "I know what ye know not." 2:30 Fitrah

Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity. 3:104 Ideal Society

Say: "No reward do I ask of you for this (Qur'an), nor am I a pretender. "This is no less than a Message to (all) the Worlds. 38:86-87 Universality

To every People have We appointed rites and ceremonies which they must follow: let them not then dispute with thee on the matter, but do thou invite (them) to thy Lord: for thou art assuredly on the Right Way. 22:67 Diversity

And if there is a party among you who believes in the message with which I have been sent, and a party which does not believe, hold yourselves in patience until Allah doth decide between us: for He is the best to decide. 7:87 Allah Judge

O ye who believe! stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety; and fear Allah. For Allah is well acquainted with all that ye do. 5:8 Self Discipline

Who made good everything that He has created, and He began the creation of man from dust. 32:7 Respect Creation

And if ye do catch them out, catch them out no worse than they catch you out: But if ye show patience, that is indeed the best (course) for those who are patient. And do thou be patient, for thy patience is but from Allah; nor grieve over them: and distress not thyself because of their plots. For Allah is with those who restrain themselves, and those who do good. 16:126-128 Patience

Say : O ye that reject Faith! I worship not that which ye worship, Nor will ye worship that which I worship. And I will not worship that which ye have been wont to worship, Nor will ye worship that which I worship. To you be your Way, and to me mine. 109:1-6 Tolerance

O ye who believe! Call in remembrance the favor of Allah unto you when certain men formed the design to stretch out their hands against you, but (Allah) held back their hands from you: so fear Allah. And on Allah let believers put (all) their trust. 5:11 Trust

- |                                 |                      |                                      |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Tolerance                    | 7. Allah as Judge    | 12. Self-Discipline                  |
| 2. Universality                 | 8. Forgiveness       | 13. Separation of People from Action |
| 3. Diversity                    | 9. <i>Fitrah</i>     | 14. Ideal Society                    |
| 4. Trust                        | 10. Patience         |                                      |
| 5. Equality                     | 11. Self-Development |                                      |
| 6. Respect for Allah's Creation |                      |                                      |